

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 181482

E.O. 11652: XGDS3

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, CH, IT

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF WANG KUO-CH'UAN, PRC
AMBASSADOR TO ITALY

REFERENCE: ROME 11709

1. THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT GRANTED AGREEMENT IN JULY 1977 FOR
THE APPOINTMENT OF WANG (PRONOUNCED WAHNG) KUO-CH'UAN
(3769/0948/2938) AS CHINESE AMBASSADOR. A PROVINCIAL
LEADER TURNED DIPLOMAT, WANG HAS BEEN AN AMBASSADOR SINCE
1957 AND HAS SERVED IN THAT CAPACITY IN EAST GERMANY,

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POLAND AND AUSTRALIA. HIS EFFECTIVENESS IN RECENT YEARS
HAS BEEN HAMPERED BY POOR HEALTH. ALTHOUGH HE IS ONE OF
PEKING'S SENIOR AMBASSADORS, WANG HAS NO KNOWN BACKGROUND
OR INTEREST IN ITALIAN AFFAIRS TO PREPARE HIM FOR HIS
ASSIGNMENT IN ROME.

PROVINCIAL LEADER

2. WANG WAS BORN IN 1911 IN HONAN. HE WAS IDENTIFIED AS A REPRESENTATIVE FROM PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS TO THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE (CPPCC),

WHICH FIRST MET IN 1949 TO ESTABLISH THE PEKING REGIME. HE LATER SERVED IN THE NOW-DEFUNCT JEHOL PROVINCE AS THE TOP CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIAL DURING 1951-55. IN JEHOL WANG HEADED THE PROVINCIAL ECONOMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, SERVED AS A MEMBER OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, AND WAS ELECTED GOVERNOR. IN 1955 HE WAS ALSO ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST JEHOL COMMITTEE OF THE QUASILEGISLATIVE CPPCC.

3. ELECTED A DEPUTY FROM JEHOL TO THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (LEGISLATURE) IN 1954, WANG WAS REELECTED IN 1958 AS A DEPUTY FROM HOPEH PROVINCE AND AGAIN IN 1964 AS A DEPUTY FROM HONAN PROVINCE. HE WAS ONE OF THE FEW CHINESE ELECTED TO THAT BODY WHILE HOLDING DIPLOMATIC POSTS ABROAD.

DIPLOMATIC CAREER

4. DURING 1957-64 WANG WAS AMBASSADOR TO EAST GERMANY. IN APRIL OF THE LATTER YEAR HE WAS APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO POLAND. IN WARSAW WANG WAS HIS COUNTRY'S CHIEF EMISARY TO THE SINO-AMERICAN AMBASSADORIAL-LEVEL TALKS. HIS
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ASSIGNMENT TO POLAND, HOWEVER, SEEMED TO BE AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HIS LOYALTY TO THE PEKING REGIME AND OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, RATHER THAN AN INDICATION OF HIS POTENTIAL AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE TALKS. WANG REMAINED IN WARSAW UNTIL 1967, WHEN HE, LIKE MOST CHINESE DIPLOMATS, WAS RECALLED TO PEKING DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.

5. IN 1970 WANG BEGAN APPEARING AS A LEADING MEMBER OF A CHINESE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT IN PEKING. THE FOLLOWING AUGUST HE BECAME VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE SINO-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION. IN THAT CAPACITY HE WAS INFLUENTIAL IN THE MOVEMENT TOWARD CHINA-JAPAN RAPPROCHEMENT. APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION FOR FRIENDSHIP WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES IN JUNE 1972, WANG'S PUBLIC ACTIVITIES SOON DIMINISHED, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF A LUNG AILMENT.

6. IN MAY 1973 WANG BECAME CHINA'S FIRST AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRALIA.

LATER
THAT YEAR AND AGAIN

IN 1974 HE
WAS HOSPITALIZED. (IT WAS RUMORED HE HAD HEART OR
BRONCHIAL TROUBLE.) WANG RETURNED TO CHINA IN MAY 1975
FOR ADDITIONAL MEDICAL TREATMENT AND FOLLOWING A LONG
CONVALESCENCE, HE WENT BACK TO AUSTRALIA. HE WAS RELIEVED
AS AMBASSADOR IN JUNE 1976. WANG HAS HELD NO KNOWN
GOVERNMENT POSITION FOR THE PAST YEAR, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF
POOR HEALTH OR FOR PREPARATION FOR HIS ROME ASSIGNMENT.

PERSONAL DATA

7. WANG IS INTELLIGENT AND PERCEPTIVE. IN THE EARLY
DAYS OF HIS CAREER WANG TENDED TOWARD HISTORICS IN
OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS WITH AMERICANS, BUT HE HAS APPEARED
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MORE RELAXED IN RECENT YEARS. HE SPEAKS MANDARIN WITH A
HEAVY HONANESE ACCENT. WANG'S ENGLISH IS LIMITED TO A
FEW POLITE PHRASES, AND HE PROBABLY SPEAKS NO ITALIAN.

8. WANG IS MARRIED TO CH'ANG YU-LIN. SHE ACCOMPANIED
HIM TO WARSAW AND CANBERRA, AND SERVED AS A COUNSELOR
AT THE EMBASSY IN AUSTRALIA.

9. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION ON WANG'S PERSONALITY, NEGOTIATING STYLE AND
POLITICAL VIEWS. SINCE IT HAS AFFECTED HIS CAREER, HIS
HEALTH IS ALSO OF INTEREST. DATA ARE ALSO DESIRABLE ON
CH'ANG, ESPECIALLY IF SHE HOLDS AN OFFICIAL POSITION AT
THE EMBASSY. GOOD QUALITY PHOTOS OF WANG WOULD ALSO BE
WELCOME. CHRISTOPHER

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